

Constitution of the BHVA
Ratified by the AGM on 7th October 2001

1. NAME

The Association shall be known as the British Veterinary Hospitals Association

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the British Veterinary Hospitals Association (hereinafter referred to as the "Association") shall be:

a) The promotion, establishment and maintenance of the highest standards of excellence in the care and treatment of animals with a view to serving and protecting the interests of animals, their owners and the veterinary profession through:

- (I) the medical and surgical facilities provided by Veterinary Hospitals*
- (II) the highest standards of skills, training and development of staff;*
- (III) the design, construction, equipping, maintenance and management of Veterinary Hospitals;*

b) Increasing the awareness of the Veterinary Profession and the general public of the services provided by, and the benefits of, Veterinary Hospitals.

The objectives of the Association shall be promoted by:

a) liaison with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and other interested organisations on all matters concerning Veterinary Hospitals

b) liaison with the BVA and collaboration with its other divisions on matters of mutual interest

d) Liaison with University Veterinary Schools on all matters of mutual interest and provision of facilities for veterinary students to gain experience of Veterinary Hospitals

e) Collaboration with International Organisations concerned principally with Veterinary Hospitals

f) The collection and dissemination of information relating to Veterinary Hospitals to members of the Veterinary Profession. This includes the design, construction and maintenance of Veterinary Hospital Premises and information regarding improvements in the standards of patient care and the management and development of staff.

g) The regular updating and publication of manuals of standard for veterinary hospitals.

h) The organisation of meetings on relevant topics

i) The promotion of the Association through specialist and, where appropriate, popular media

j) Such means and enterprises as may from time to time appear to be advantageous to the realisation of the objects of the Association

3. Membership

There shall be six classes of membership

a) Hospital member

b) Associate member

c) Honorary member

d) Retired member

e) Student member

f) Supplementary member

a) Hospital Member

A Hospital member will be an MRCVS working within an organisation which runs an RCVS approved Veterinary Hospital. There shall be no more than one Hospital member per Veterinary Hospital.

b) Associate Member

An Associate member shall be an individual involved in the veterinary profession.

c) Retired Member

Shall be a previous member retired from active employment who may retain their membership of the association at a reduced annual subscription

d) Honorary Member

Is a person nominated by council and approved by a general meeting of the association. An Honorary member may also be a Hospital or Associate member.

e) Student Member

Is available to any Veterinary Student as defined by current legislation.

f) Supplementary member

Is a person working within the practice and nominated by a Hospital or Associate member to receive correspondence and other benefits of the Association as resolved by council.

4. Applications for Membership

- i. All applications for membership shall be submitted to the *Honorary Secretary* on the appropriate form provided by the Association and shall be accompanied by the subscription appropriate to the class of membership sought
- ii. All Applications for membership shall be considered by the Council and may be approved by a majority vote. In the event of an unsuccessful application the subscription shall be returned.

5) Termination of Membership

Any member ceasing to meet the requirements of this constitution in relation to the appropriate class of their membership shall cease to be a member.

Any member whose actions are contrary to the aims and objectives of the Association may be removed by a majority decision of council, this decision to be ratified as an agenda item at a general meeting.

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- i) *All members shall pay to the Association such sum by way of annual subscription as may be determined from time to time by the Association in General Meeting in respect of the appropriate class of Membership.*
- ii) *Members shall be liable to pay the appropriate subscription in relation to the current financial year of the Association on application and thereafter pay the appropriate subscription on the first day of January in each ensuing year.*
- iii) *Members joining part way through a financial year may pay a reduced subscription for that part year at the discretion of council.*

iii) The Honorary Treasurer shall report to the Council the name of any member whose subscription is in arrears for more than 90 days and unless the council shall decide otherwise, the membership of such member shall thereupon lapse.

iv) Any member whose membership has lapsed through non payment of subscription, may be re-instated upon application accompanied by payment of the current annual subscription. Any

member who is more than 12 months in arrears shall be required to make a new application to rejoin the Association.

v) No member may attend or vote at a General Meeting unless they are a fully paid up member of the Association.

6. General Meetings

i) The Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting once in each calendar year on such date as shall be determined by the Council. Notice convening such Annual General Meeting shall be given by the Honorary Secretary to all members in writing at least 28 days prior to the meeting. The notice shall declare that the business to be conducted at the said Annual General Meeting shall consist of:

a) The presentation and confirmation of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting

b) The reception of the reports of the President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer and other members of council.

c) The adoption of Accounts

d) The election of Officers

e) The election to the Council of six Hospital Members and two Associate Members according to the voting rules of this constitution.

f) The appointment of auditors

g) Any other business of which prior notice has been given to the Honorary Secretary and which is set out in the notice convening the meeting.

3) The association shall hold an Extraordinary General Meeting if:

a) called by the President, with the concurrence of two other Officers of the Association;

b) a request stating the nature of the business of the meeting signed for and on behalf of at least ten Hospital, Associate, Honorary or Retired Members is received by the Honorary Secretary.

iv) Notice convening any Extraordinary General Meeting shall be given by the Honorary Secretary to all members in writing at least 28 days prior to the holding of such meeting and shall state the nature of the business to be discussed at the meeting. No business shall be discussed other than that for which the meeting has been called.

v) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held not more than three months after the calling of such a meeting by the President or the receipt of a request for such a meeting by the Honorary Secretary

7 VOTING AND OTHER RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

i) All members shall be eligible to attend any Ordinary or General Meetings of the Association

a) Only Hospital members and those Associate members currently serving on Council, shall have the right to vote on the constitution or on changes to the Recommendations for Standards for Veterinary Hospitals

b) Hospital, Associate, Honorary and Retired members shall have the right to vote on all other matters raised at the meeting.

c) A Hospital or Associate member may nominate another member to vote on their behalf by proxy at a General Meeting. Such proxy must be in a signed written authority presented to the Honorary Secretary before the commencement of the meeting.

d) Hospital Members and Honorary Members shall be eligible to stand for election as an Officer or Council member of the Association.

v) Associate Members shall be eligible for election to council and as Officers of the Association with the exception of the posts of President, Junior Vice President and Senior Vice President.

8. Quorum

i) The quorum of any General Meeting shall consist of ten Hospital Members duly represented at the said meeting.

ii) The quorum at any meeting of the Council, or of any committee of the Association shall be 50% of the members of the Council or the committee as the case may be.

9. The Officers

i) The Officers of the Association shall consist of a President, a Senior Vice President, a Junior Vice- President, an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer all of whom must be members of the BVA.

ii) The President shall:

a) Preside at all General Meetings attended

b) Serve as Chairman of Council Meetings

c) *Serve as ex officio member of all committees of the Association with the right to vote. The President may have an additional casting vote in the event of a tied vote*

d) *Will normally act as the Association's representative.*

e) At the conclusion of their term of office will serve as Senior Vice President.

f) Will in general perform all the duties incidental to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council from time to time.

The President's term of office will normally not exceed two years.

iii) The Junior Vice President shall:

a) Serve as President-Elect and perform the duties of the President in the absence of both the Senior Vice President and the President

b) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council from time to time.

iii) The Senior Vice President shall

a) Perform the duties of the President in his absence

b) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council from time to time.

iv) The Honorary Secretary shall:

a) *Attend all General Meetings of the Association and meetings of the Council or appoint a deputy to act on their behalf thereat*

- b) At such meetings present the Minutes of the appropriate preceding meeting
- c) Arrange the order of the business for each such meeting and prepare the minutes thereof
- d) Should circulate the minutes of such meetings within 28 days of the meeting.
- f) Conduct the correspondence of the Association; and
- g) Have charge, under the direction of the Council , of all records of transactions and proceedings.
- v) The Honorary Treasurer shall:-
 - a) *Attend all General Meetings of the Association and meetings of the Council or appoint a deputy to act on their behalf thereat;*
 - b) Present a financial statement to Council meetings and at other times at the request of council.
 - c) Receive all money payable to the Association and from such moneys pay all sums payable by the Association
 - d) Keep an account of all receipts and payments in such manner as may be directed by Council;
 - e) Pay no money on account of the Association except current expenses, without prior approval of Council;
 - f) Invest all sums of money not required for the immediate use of the Association in such manner as the Council may direct;

- g) Prepare an Income and Expenditure Account for each year together with a balance sheet made up to the end of the financial year;
- h) Arrange for an annual audit of accounts by such person or persons as may be appointed annually at The Annual General Meeting
- i) Ensure that all documents of title relating to the Association are placed in the safekeeping of the Association Banker; and
- j) Pay reasonable out of pocket expenses to the Officers of the Association and such other Members of the Association as Council may provide.

10 The Council

- i) The Council shall consist of the Officers and *eight representatives* duly elected in terms of the constitution.
 - a) Six of those representatives shall be Hospital Members, nominated by Council or two Hospital Members, and elected at a General Meeting.*
 - b) Two of those representatives shall be Associate Members, nominated by Council or two Members and elected at a General Meeting.*
- ii) The council shall:
 - a) Meet at least three times a year and on such occasions as may be necessary to consider and conduct the affairs of the Association;

b) Council meetings may be called by the President or an officer together with two other members of council. Notice of at least 28 days should be given prior to council meetings and meetings must be held within 60 days of a written request to hold the meeting being received by the Honorary Secretary.

c) Elect the Chairman of all committees of the Association, such election being for a period terminating at the first meeting of the appropriate committee following the Annual General Meeting; and

d) In the event of any vacancy occurring on Council shall appoint a appropriate member to fill such a vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting .

e) Nominate appropriate members for election as officers and council members at general meetings.

f) Shall nominate a person to maintain the Association's membership list

11. COMMITTEES

The Council may from time to time appoint Committees with Such terms of reference, functions and membership as the Council may in its absolute discretion decide.

12. FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year of the Association shall run from the first day of January to the last day of December.

13. INCOME AND PROPERTY

The income and property of the Association from whatever source derived shall be solely used for the promotion of the objectives of the Association. No portion shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend or bonus, or otherwise by way of profit, to persons who at any time are or have been Members of the Association or to persons claiming through any of them, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith or remuneration to any persons in return for services actually rendered to the Association.

14. FINANCIAL LIABILITY OF MEMBERS

Every Member of the Association shall be liable to contribute to the assets of the Association in the event of the same being wound up during the term of membership of the said Member or within one year afterwards, for payment of debts and liabilities of the Association contracted prior to the cessation of membership and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up the same and for adjustment of the rights of contributors amongst themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding the appropriate subscriptions.

15 THE CONSTITUTION

i) This Constitution may only be amended at a General Meeting and then only in accordance with a formal proposal for amendment, setting out in writing the proposed amendment in detail and submitted to the Honorary Secretary not less than 60 days before the date of that meeting.

ii) On receipt of any proposal to amend the constitution the Honorary Secretary shall forthwith present the proposal to the Council for consideration and recommendation.

iii) The proposal, together with Council's recommendations, must be included in the agenda for a General Meeting to be held within 12 months.

iv) A resolution to amend the Constitution will require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at a General Meeting to be carried and shall be effective from that date.

v) Any matter relating to the Association and not provided for in this Constitution shall be left to the discretion of the Council.